

Delta Protection Commission Primary Zone Study

Status Update July 29, 2010

Senate Bill X7 1 directs the Delta Protection Commission to prepare and submit to the legislature recommendations regarding the potential expansion of or change to the Primary Zone or the Delta, including recommendations on the status of: Rio Vista, Isleton, Bethel Island, Brannan-Andrus Island, Cosumnes/Mokelumne Floodway, and the San Joaquin/South Delta lowlands. Based on this directive, the Delta Protection Commission initiated a process in February 2010 to complete the Primary Zone Study.

Substantial Progress on Study Preparation

In February 2010, the Delta Protection Commission established the Primary Zone Study Committee consisting of seven members of the Delta Protection Commission representing a broad swath of interests both within and outside of the Delta.

Primary Zone Study Committee Established

The first Committee meeting was held in March 2010 and the Committee has held four subsequent meetings. The Committee will continue to meet monthly until the Study is completed.

Request for Proposals Released/Consultant Hired

Despite severe funding challenges, the Committee was able to release a Request for Proposals, interview shortlisted consulting firms and hire a consultant to prepare the Study in April 2010. Unfortunately, funding for the Study was not available until July 2010.

Conceptual Framework Established

The Committee has directed the work of the consultant and achieved significant milestones in Study preparation even under DPC's constrained financial conditions. The Committee and consultant have developed the conceptual framework for completion of the study including the identification of the five key goals in assessing potential boundary adjustments. These include Agriculture, Wildlife, Recreation, Economic Sustainability, and the Delta as a Place. These goals were derived from the 1992 Delta Protection Act and the direction provided by Senate Bill X7 1, which directs the Delta Protection Commission to consider and plan for the economic sustainability of the Sacramento San Joaquin Delta.

Study Area Boundaries Identified

The boundaries for the study have been preliminarily delineated by the Consultant based on input provided by the Committee and the public.

Data Collection Ongoing

The extensive data available regarding Delta resources and issues is being compiled for the six designated study areas and the consultant team is developing a ranking matrix that will be used to refine the Study recommendations.

Public Outreach Initiated

The first steps in the public outreach component of the Study have been completed, which included two community workshops held in the Delta and interviews with local government representatives, community groups and private individuals within the Primary Zone Study boundaries. In addition, the Committee has held monthly meetings that are open to the public and the minutes from all of these meetings are included on the Delta Protection Commissions website. Input received during the Committee meetings and from the public outreach efforts is being used to refine the study parameters.

Public Concerns

A key issue raised during the community workshops is the need to gather additional public input and reach out to communities potentially affected by the Study. Community members are concerned that due to the tight timelines for completing the Study, many of the people that could be affected by the Study recommendations have not had an opportunity to participate in the process and are not aware of its ramifications.

Community members that have been able to participate have raised concerns about including areas within the Primary Zone and have specifically requested that the following areas be excluded from the Study Areas:

- Stewart Tract
- Oxbow Marina
- Area on Brannan Island in southeast corner of Highway 12 and the Sacramento River

In addition, local government agencies and interested community members have requested that specific areas currently included in the Primary Zone be considered in the Study for redesignation as Secondary Zone. These areas include the following:

- Unincorporated Towns (Clarksburg, Courtland, Hood, Locke, Walnut Grove and Ryde)
- Snug Harbor
- Agricultural/Industrial Area Near Port of Stockton

In response to these concerns, the Committee and consultant team are developing a broader public outreach effort in order to ensure all interested parties have an opportunity to participate in the Study process. This effort is discussed in greater detail below

Draft Recommendation to the Legislature

The Delta Primary Zone Study Committee has made extensive progress in completing the Delta Primary Zone Study. In completing their efforts, the Committee has heard clearly from the public that additional

outreach is necessary prior to finalizing any recommendations regarding boundary line adjustments. In addition, At this time, insufficient information is available for the Committee to make specific boundary line adjustment recommendations. Therefore, the Committee recommends that continued preparation of the Study be pursued consistent with the proposed work program and schedule identified below.

Proposed Work Program and Schedule

Finalize the Study Framework

The States objectives in adoption the Delta Protection Act included protecting the key resources of the Delta, including Agriculture, Wildlife, and Recreation. In addition, the Delta Protection Commission is directed by Senate Bill X7 1 to consider and plan for the economic sustainability of the Sacramento San Joaquin Delta and to consider the Delta as a Place. Therefore, these objectives provide the framework for evaluating potential boundary line adjustments within the Delta.

Constraints Evaluation

The Study will evaluate specific criteria that can affect these objectives including flood zone designations, soil and drainage characteristics, habitat types, agricultural quality and vitality, levee designation (project/non-project, subventions, Proposition 84/1E funded), existing land use, planned growth, availability of infrastructure, planned infrastructure, seismic conditions, presence of cultural and historical resources, public health hazards, recreational uses, applicable local and regional plans and policies, housing supply (including agriculture related), economic conditions (trends and consequences), and community/stakeholder interests.

In evaluating these criteria, the consultant team will work closely with the Committee to develop a ranking and weighting system that is appropriate for the individual resources of concern. The priority in developing this ranking and weighting system will be to ensure the information developed for this study is objective and that it can be used to determine the suitability and feasibility of boundary adjustments for the specific study areas.

A detailed summary of the constraints analysis ranking results will be prepared for the Committee's consideration. The summary will be presented in the form of a report that will describe the specific ranking process, the weighting used for the individual resource criteria, and the ranking results. The summary will also identify how public involvement from interested stakeholders was integrated in the ranking process. The summary will be presented to the Committee and will be discussed in detail during a Committee meeting in support of developing the specific recommendations.

Public Outreach

A robust public information program will assure that a broad range of community members are informed and engaged in the participation process. Some important aspects of a successful public information campaign include developing key messaging that speaks to the concerns of diverse stakeholder groups, implementing multiple channels of communication with stakeholder groups as well

as leveraging community leaders to reach out to and engage other community members and using several public information tools to get the message out.

The consultant team proposes to facilitate four community meetings that will be hosted in the study area locations to allow stakeholders/public members to learn more about the purpose of the study, review information gathered to date and to provide input to help shape the study to reflect the community needs and concerns.

The consultant team will work with Delta Protection Commission to assure that a large number of potential stakeholders within all six study areas are identified in the current stakeholder contact list and will continue to manage the list throughout the process. It is very important that the stakeholder list reflects a diverse range of perspectives. The list will include residents, businesses, community, civic and business organizations, representatives from the development, agricultural and recreational communities, environmental/natural resources groups, as well as Reclamation Districts and Flood Control agencies.

The consultant team will develop and finalize news releases for each of the Community Workshops and work with the media to assure coverage on the efforts.

Develop Recommendations

Based on the tasks above, the consultant team will draft recommendations for consideration by the Committee. These recommendations will be appropriately supported by the work completed in preparing the study and will incorporate input from the community gathered during the public outreach process. The consultant team will work closely with the Committee to refine the recommendations for submittal to the Legislature.

Schedule

The consultant team estimates that the Study can be completed including the necessary outreach efforts, and recommendations can be finalized within approximately four months.